

Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office

2002 Annual Report
Annual Report



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The Defense Prisoner of War/Missing Personnel Office establishes policy, and exercises control and oversight for investigation and recovery related to missing persons, including search, rescue, escape and evasion.

This 2002 annual report provides a window into some of DPMO's programs and initiatives. For more information about our organization, and to view regularly updated material on our mission, please visit our Web site at: www.dtic.mil/dpmo.

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A family of a recently identified serviceman embrace as they view his name on the Vietnam War Memorial Wall, Washington.

No loss is as painful to a family as that of a loved one who honored the nation's call, served his or her country, yet never returned from foreign battlefields. The nation's effort to recover fallen comrades underscores the value we Americans place even on a single human life. This is the nation's commitment to our great country, to the families of those fallen, and to the servicemember who made the ultimate sacrifice. We seek the *fullest possible accounting* for all Americans who died in defense of our nation. Simply put, whether missing as a result of past, present or future conflicts—we will bring them home.



The men and women of DPMO are pleased to share with you some of the initiatives of 2002 for which they are responsible. In all corners of the globe, the leadership they provide in achieving the *fullest possible accounting* of our fallen warriors, should make every American proud.

Our people, and those of our partners in this effort, continue to set a standard seen nowhere else in the world. Whether they are negotiating with the North Koreans; initiating contact with the governments of Burma or Papua New Guinea; or broadening our contacts with Russia, China, Iraq or Japan, these are highly skilled and talented people whose dedication is unparalleled.

They are proud of their work, and so am I. Having been honored to serve as their leader since 2001, I know how committed each of them is to our sacred mission. The following pages share some detail of that work with you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. D. Jennings", written in a cursive style.

Jerry D. Jennings
Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense
POW/Missing Personnel Office

HISTORY



From World War II to the present, more than 88,000 Americans remain missing in action. The United States government is dedicated to achieving the *fullest possible accounting* for these patriots and their families. The mission of accounting for this nation's POWs and MIAs was scattered among several agencies, until it became clear that one single office should have responsibility to establish and oversee a consistent, government-wide effort.

The Defense POW/Missing in Action Office was established in July 1993. In 1996, Congress passed the Missing Persons Act (Appendix A, page 40), which placed the responsibility for policy oversight of Personnel Accounting and Personnel Recovery into one office under the Secretary of Defense. To reflect our expanded mission, our name was then changed to the Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office.

Our new office uses historical data, witness



National Archives of Cambodia, Phnom Penh. We are assisted by local experts in research of the Khmer Rouge documents.

interviews, improved technology and scientific advances for all our accounting and recovery missions. To identify remains of our missing, we continue to gather and access all available data and information on each individual.

This 2002 report shows DPMO personnel as they carry out

their worldwide mission. It begins with the research necessary to establish case files for those still unaccounted-for and moves through our other responsibilities in personnel accounting. Later, the report addresses our mission of personnel recovery, whereby we return safely to U.S. control Americans in harm's way. The report concludes by showing how we communicate our mission to the families, the Congress and the American people.

ARCHIVAL RESEARCH

DPMO conducts archival research to retrieve evidence concerning the circumstances of loss on the unaccounted-for from World War II to the present. Our professional historians and archivists search U.S. and international sources for information. Research takes place in our National Archives, U.S. military history institutes and museums, colleges and universities. Our researchers review tens of thousands of documents every year. This archival research is a primary tool DPMO analysts use to aid in accounting for America's missing.

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

Begun in 1996, the oral history program continued to make progress in 2002. We recorded our 1,367th interview in December. For the first time, DPMO analysts attended a reunion of graves registration personnel who had participated in all wars since WWII. At this September gathering in Petersburg, Va., we made it known that we sought to gather recollections about America's missing from mortuary affairs veterans who had participated in remains preparation procedures in WWII and the Korean War. Analysts also established contacts in the U.S. Army quartermaster school and museum who will assist us in obtaining graves registration records. Potentially, these contacts may be helpful in research on remains exhumed from the *National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific*, commonly known as "The Punchbowl," in 1999 and 2001.



Korean War Veterans observe a Repatriation Ceremony of American soldiers' remains returning from North Korea.

VETERANS' ORGANIZATIONS

Our contact with veterans' organizations continues to assist our analysts in assembling data on combat losses. We derive much of our analysis from fellow soldiers who last saw a missing servicemember. Their personal accounts of the actual incident aid our analysts in determining what steps we need to take next.

This year DPMO and representatives of the Central Identification Laboratory, Hawaii (CILHI) met with veterans from the Chosin Few International Association and Army Chapter, 1st Cavalry Division, 2nd Infantry Division, the 1st Marine Division, and the 24th Infantry Division, and attended the winter national and Illinois chapter conventions of the Korean War Veterans' Association. For the seventh time, we attended the Korean War Ex-POW and Tiger Survivors' Association Reunion. Multiple visits to these events have proven useful as analysts commonly meet new members joining these organizations—even after 50 years. As in years past, the veterans provide eyewitness information on loss incidents for men still unaccounted-for, to include location of

loss and burial data. Particularly helpful were new contacts among 24th ID veterans who had recollections from captivity the first two months of the Korean War. We also conducted extensive discussions with the leadership of the OSS Detachment One Association, which fully supports our accounting mission in Burma.



Perm-36 Gulag, now a Russian historical museum

DPMO and the service casualty offices worked with the “Korean War Project,” a Korean War commemoration Web site to locate additional veterans with direct knowledge on graves registration operations. We are seeking information on the 1954 *Operation Glory* remains exchange and the Eighth Army graves registration operations conducted in South Korea from 1951 to 1955.



Native Siberian/Yakutian eyewitness to special KGB prison camps in where Europeans were detained. During interviews with USRJC staff members, he sketched a detailed map of the former prison camp locations along the Lena River (Tiksi, Russia).

U.S. — RUSSIA JOINT COMMISSION ON POW/MIAS

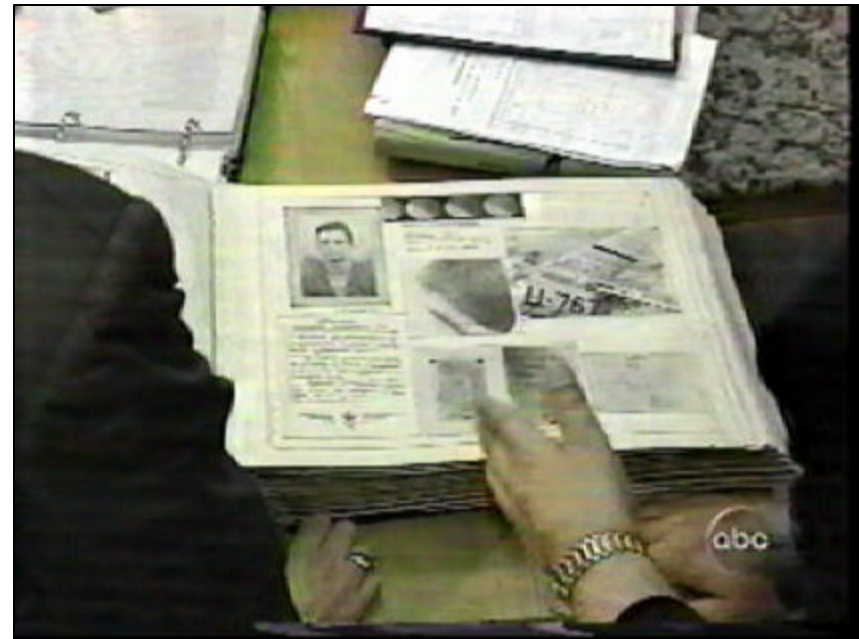
The presidents of the United States and Russia established the U.S.-Russia Joint Commission on POW/MIAs on March 26, 1992. The USRJC is comprised of senior American and Russian executive and legislative branch officials who conduct plenary sessions and working-level meetings to assess and coordinate policy, research and investigative efforts aimed at clarifying the fates of missing American and Russian servicemembers.

DPMO provides direct analytical, investigative and administrative support to the USRJC. The work of the commission focuses on three primary objectives. The first objective is to determine whether any American POW/MIAs are still being held against their will on the territory of the former Soviet Union and, if so, to secure their immediate release and repatriation. The second objective is to determine the fate of unaccounted-for members of the U.S. armed forces who were located on the territory of the former

Soviet Union or about whom the Russian government may have information. The third objective is to clarify facts pertaining to Soviet personnel missing from their war in Afghanistan, from Cold War-era loss incidents and from WWII.

The commission has held 18 plenary sessions (16 in Moscow and two in Washington), in addition to three meetings of principals, numerous technical talks and working level sessions.

To facilitate its work, the commission is organized into four working groups examining World War II, the Cold War, the Korean War and the Vietnam War. The U.S. side of the commission has also established a special Gulag study group to focus exclusively on the numerous eyewitness accounts about Americans in the Gulag, the Stalin-era Soviet prison camp system.



Wartime archival records prove useful in determining fate of American pilots shot down in former Soviet Union territory.

At the close of the 1991 Gulf War, one U.S. loss remained unresolved. Lt. Cmdr. (now Captain) Michael Scott Speicher, a Navy F/A-18 pilot, was lost January 17, 1991, approximately 100 miles from Baghdad.

Speicher's case is an ongoing mystery, since Iraq's government has provided DoD little credible information on the incident. The Department of the Navy initially carried Speicher as missing-in-action until May 22, 1991, when it officially changed his status to killed-in-action, body-not-recovered. In January 2001, the Secretary of the Navy reinstated Speicher's missing-in-action status.

This year, DPMO continued to be actively involved in efforts to account for Speicher. In March, Iraq sent a message to the United States government through the International Committee of the Red Cross. Although Iraq stated that it had no new information on Speicher, its officials invited the U.S. to send a delegation to Baghdad to discuss the case. The State Department responded through ICRC channels indicating that the U.S. would be willing to meet with them in Geneva, Switzerland, if they first provided answers to several questions for which they should have knowledge. On October 11, 2002, after a careful review of the evidence available, the Secretary



A joyous Gulf War homecoming

of the Navy changed Speicher's status to missing-captured. The government of Iraq never responded to our questions nor our proposal to meet in Geneva.

Under the leadership of our Ambassador to Kuwait, DPMO actively participates in the Gulf War Tripartite Commission that is chaired by the ICRC. The TPC meets quarterly in

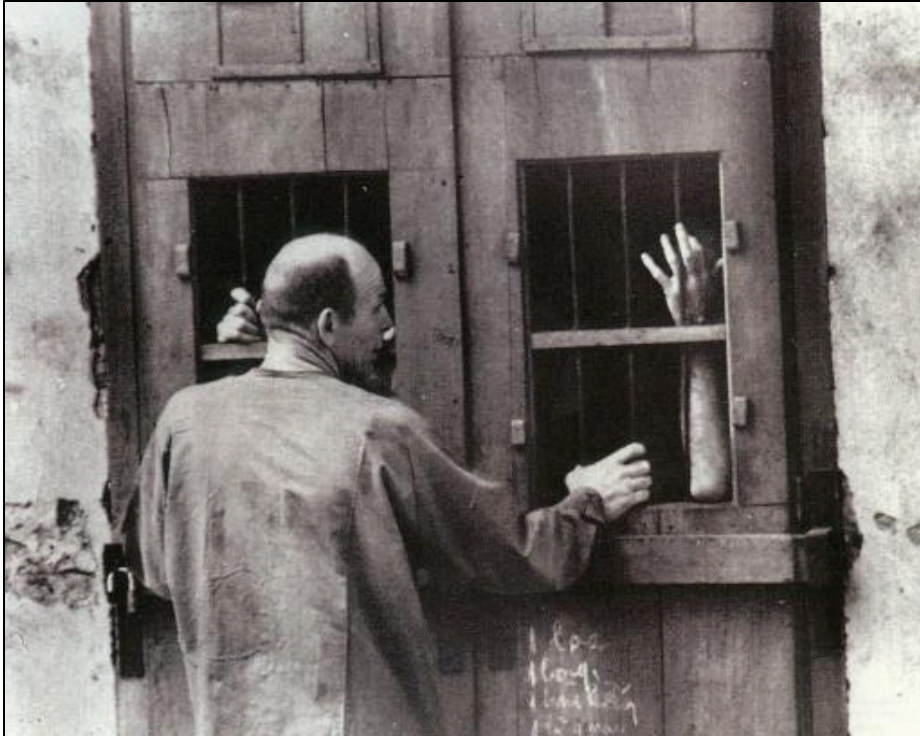


Mr. Jennings speaks with Kuwaiti government official to emphasize our commitment to accounting for all MIAs.

Geneva, Switzerland to account for all the Gulf War missing. Other voting members of the commission include the United Kingdom, France, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Iraq. However, Iraq has officially boycotted the TPC meetings since January 1999.

Throughout 2002, TPC members worked with the ICRC to develop a proposal for bringing Iraq back to the Geneva meetings. In July, coalition members (U.S., U.K., France, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait) agreed on a formal proposal to modify the TPC rules in an effort to gain Iraqi participation in the process. During the October meeting, the coalition delegates refined and agreed upon the proposal. Iraq then accepted the proposal on November 27th, and we anticipated that its delegation would return to the TPC to formalize the rule changes.

In addition to participating in the TPC process, Mr. Jennings made the first DASD-level visit to Israel, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait in May dedicated entirely to POW/MIA related issues. He met with key officials in each of these countries to emphasize the USG's determination to resolve the Speicher case.



American POWs in North Vietnam

CASUALTY RESOLUTION

As in past years, our analysts support the on-going fieldwork of the Joint Task Force-Full Accounting to ensure that investigators are armed with the best possible background information before they interview witnesses, survey or excavate sites of loss, or perform any other field activities. A crucial component of the mechanism by which we plan and agree upon future investigative efforts is the “coordination conference,” a working-level meeting of analysts from DPMO, JTF-FA, CILHI, Stony Beach and the Life Sciences Equipment Laboratory (LSEL). DPMO chaired two of these conferences held this year, where analysts from the entire accounting community discussed nearly 800 individual cases and identified courses of action for next steps toward resolving each case.

DPMO analysts continue to work the Last Known Alive cases which receive priority attention in the office and in the field. In a February meeting convened by DPMO, a panel of flag officers reviewed analytical recommendations that were the

joint product of DPMO and JTF-FA analysts. After reviewing the evidence for each case, the panel confirmed the fate in six remaining LKA cases. We continue to actively pursue all 109 remaining LKA cases. (39 in Vietnam, 55 in Laos and 15 in Cambodia.)

DPMO facilitated the receipt and processing of information, materials and remains from Canada's Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, on a 1965 air crash in Laos. The Canadians, along with French, Indian and Polish members of the International Control and Supervisory Commission (the monitoring organization established by the Geneva Accords ending the French Indochina War) are believed to have died when their aircraft crashed in northern Laos, but their remains have never been identified. Canadian officials received the materials directly from the Lao in response to a query and requested that they be handled through USG accounting channels.

DPMO analysts interviewed veterans of the former Soviet Union in Russia, Belarus, Ukraine and Latvia,

searching for information to clarify the fates of missing U.S. servicemen. We asked the Russians to help locate veterans who may have participated in or observed shootdowns of U.S. aircraft in Southeast Asia, or who supported the units that shot down our aircraft. Our analysts have also researched Russian-language archival documents, memoirs, books, articles and Russian Internet sites seeking leads and background information about what might have happened to our missing. The Russian side of the commission recently provided us with a document containing a further 124 "excerpts" taken from shootdown reporting in the Ministry of Defense's central archive. This research, along with a reinvigorated interview program, will continue in 2003.

This year, Mr. Jennings moved to ensure that President Bush's commitment to accounting for our Vietnam War missing personnel remains a national priority.

He emphasized this priority through a proactive schedule of oversight visits to Vietnam and Laos and plans to visit Cambodia early in 2003. DPMO advance team

representatives visited the three countries to lay the groundwork for talks to ensure the host governments understood the purpose of Mr. Jennings' visits and were prepared to address his priorities. The DASD initiated a senior wartime-leader program in Laos and Vietnam, personally meeting with highly-placed veterans and officials to discuss their wartime experiences and solicit their assistance in accounting for Americans. He also emphasized the importance of establishing an archival program in Laos and expanding the successful archival program in Vietnam.



Vietnamese officials visit DPMO to discuss POW/MIA issues.

Mr. Jennings' initiatives increased Lao and Vietnamese awareness that the the United States will pursue these issues vigorously until we achieve the desired results. All three nations pledged strong support for our personnel accounting effort and continued cooperation from their government and military officials.

The DASD has developed professional rapport with the Vietnamese, Lao and Cambodian ambassadors to the United States through a series of formal and informal opportunities for interaction. These relationships provide him a forum to discuss critical and ongoing accounting issues with senior officials of these nations and to pave the way for future visits.

The accounting mission continues to receive high national priority and visibility. In his Presidential Certification to Congress and National POW/MIA Recognition Day Proclamation, President Bush reaffirmed the central principle of his Vietnam policy is achieving the *fullest possible accounting* for our missing Americans. Every senior U.S. official who visits Vietnam includes POW/MIA issues in their talks. Their visits to excavation sites and repatriation ceremonies demonstrate our nation's resolve and commitment

to our mission. DPMO provides background information and policy points concerning the accounting issue to all senior U.S. officials who visit Cambodia and Laos and attend meetings of organizations such as the Association of Southeast Asia Nations and the Asian-Pacific Economic Cooperation Forum.

Senior leaders in Southeast Asia and in other areas of the world where Americans remain unaccounted-for take note of actions such as these and realize that better relations with the U.S. will ensue when accompanied by full cooperation in accounting for our missing personnel.

Since the end of the Vietnam War, we have repatriated and identified the remains of more than 680 Americans lost during that war. We continue our efforts to account for those still missing through field activities to locate and recover remains and through investigations to resolve the question of live Americans.

In 2003, JTF-FA and CILHI are expected to merge to form one organization. The merger presents a new set of resource challenges but will increase the effectiveness and

efficiency of the accounting mission. The DASD appointed a liaison from DPMO to oversee the merger.

VIETNAM

Vietnam continues to provide good cooperation in accounting for missing Americans. In the past few years, officials have allowed us increased access to their archives and witnesses and have conducted numerous in-depth unilateral investigations that have resulted in a number of valuable new leads.

All of Mr. Jennings' meetings in Hanoi stressed that DPMO will not reduce its efforts until we reach the *fullest possible accounting*, which requires a robust Vietnamese partnership. Vietnamese senior leadership has promised Mr. Jennings that they will continue to cooperate with our efforts until we have completed our work.

In July, DPMO and JTF-FA analysts participated in a unilateral focus meeting in Hanoi with their Vietnamese counterparts who agreed to accept and investigate the case leads we provided.

This summer, Mr. Jennings returned to Vietnam for additional talks with senior Vietnamese officials, including Deputy Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung and others in the ministries of foreign affairs, national defense and public security. As part of his senior wartime leader program, he



Mr. Jennings meets with Vietnamese General Vo Nguyen Giap as part of the senior wartime leader program.

met with General of the Army Vo Nguyen Giap. He and other Vietnamese officials again pledged their continued support to our accounting mission.

At the quarterly technical talks in Hanoi in December, the Vietnamese agreed to a U.S. proposal providing greater flexibility for interviewing witnesses who walk into JTF-FA's detachment in Hanoi unannounced with information about missing Americans. The Vietnamese also agreed to the use of dogs specially trained in locating human remains, on an experimental basis. These actions demonstrate the increasing level of Vietnamese cooperation.

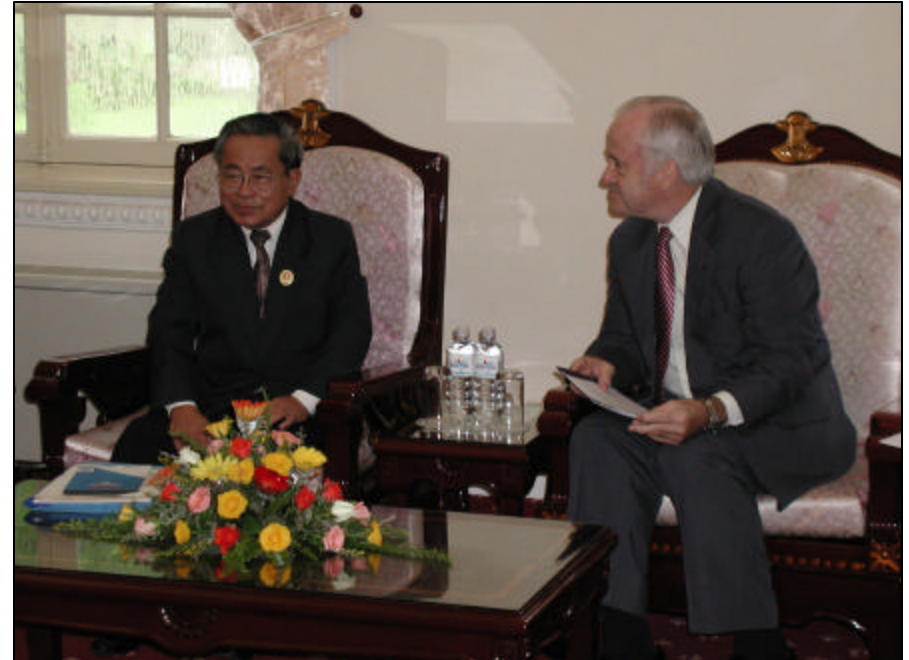
LAOS

While we have seen some operational gains over the last year, Laos continues to present a challenge. This is due partly to the large backlog of sites we have identified for excavation (about 70) but have yet to begin. At a rate of approximately 10 excavations per year, coupled with the fact that we continue to identify new sites each year, we expect the effort in Laos to continue for many years. These sites

represent about 120 individuals. The slow rate of excavations is due primarily to restrictions we have been operating under and to U.S. manpower and budgetary limitations.

DPMO is working actively with Lao officials and U.S. counterpart organizations to continue finding new ways to overcome these challenges.

The primary mission of Mr. Jennings' trip to Laos in October was to re-energize the Lao government to resolve current restrictions on the number of U.S. personnel allowed in-country and their duration of stay in Laos. Along with productive discussions with Lao officials, the DASD launched an initiative to meet with senior wartime leaders. The goal of this meeting was to obtain access to information that may ultimately help us find answers about our unaccounted-for. The meeting also broached broad topics such as the existence of and access to archives and laid the groundwork for a possible meeting between U.S. and Lao veterans in 2003.



Mr. Jennings addresses unresolved operational issues during talks with Laotian government officials.

We are hopeful that Mr. Jennings' visit will result in the Lao government's readiness to increase its commitment to the POW/MIA effort during 2003. Together with the U.S. State Department, JTF-FA, CILHI, Stony Beach and the families of missing Americans, DPMO will continue to work closely with Laos to ensure a comprehensive approach to our accounting efforts in Laos.



Excavation operations at this site can begin only after the water has been completely removed.

CAMBODIA

Our relations with Cambodian government officials remain strong and productive with respect to POW/MIA issues. They fully support our mission and are willing to assist in expanding our operations, permitting us to excavate sites as we find them. Officials are forthcoming with archival information, readily allow interviews and

give our investigators unfettered access throughout the country with little or no advance coordination. Cambodia allows a permanent U.S. Stony Beach representative to live and work in country, whose primary focus is pursuing information leading to the *fullest possible accounting*. Our efforts in Cambodia have been very successful due to the high level of cooperation there.

This year, the Cambodian POW/MIA committee investigated information related to nine different cases. The investigations were

thorough and the resulting reports were very helpful to our analysts, generating numerous leads for the joint Cambodian/U.S. field teams. JTF-FA hosted a seminar in Cambodia, during which provincial officials from throughout the country received briefings about our activities there, and participated in discussions about how

to move our efforts forward. The seminar afforded them the opportunity to become more familiar with the POW/MIA issue. We are optimistic that the pledges of support we received will further enhance our ongoing efforts in Cambodia.



Excavation operations at this site require methodical removal of all dirt and debris.



Maj. Tim Falkowski (left) with Mr. Morris Hershman, an American-born citizen who spent almost 60 years in the Soviet Union either in prisons or labor camps after his father was killed on the front lines fighting the Nazis.

DPMO analysts participated in the CILHI survey of a CIA Cold War-era C-47 crash site in July. This month-long survey required traveling to remote areas of Jilin Province, China, near North Korea — formerly part of Manchuria. A DPMO analyst provided Chinese Mandarin interpretation in addition to serving as one of the team's incident experts.

DPMO conducted aggressive on-the-ground research, opened new doors at Russian archives, interviewed dozens of former Gulag inmates both in Russia

and in the U.S., and established research contracts with Russian Gulag experts. We know that among the vast array of Gulag prisoners were dozens of Americans, including at least six military servicemembers. The immediate goal of the Gulag study group is to continue building the network of researchers and professionals who can contribute to the overall research on Americans in the Gulag system. As a guide to Gulag researchers worldwide, the team published the fourth edition of the Gulag study in the English and Russian languages. It is available on the DPMO Web site.

In the past year, DPMO analysts traveled to 14 cities in Russia, the Ukraine and to former Gulag campsites to speak with former inmates and researchers. A search is ongoing for the grave of a U.S. airman who reportedly was killed in a Soviet prison camp in 1950.

In the area of document exploitation, our analysts recently established research accounts at two Russian state archives that hold Soviet internal police documents on Gulag prisoners, foreign internees and foreign POWs. Moreover, access has been granted to formerly restricted KGB prisoner convoy troop holdings—documents that list the names of prisoners who were transported to and from the vast array of prison camps.

We also established research contracts with two Russian human rights groups this year and set up an information sharing relationship with the ARK foundation in New York, which was formed to investigate abuse of human rights in Russia. This effort continues to yield information and new leads for further investigative work.



Korean War veteran stands watch over the war memorial honoring all Americans who served during this conflict. On July 27th, in their honor, a tribute ceremony commemorating Armistice Day was held at this site in Washington.

Working through the USRJC, DPMO continued research in the Central Archives of the Russian Ministry of Defense at Podolsk. Researchers reviewed thousands of pages of declassified documents of the Soviet 64th Fighter Aviation Corps and located fate-clarifying information on seven more Korean War missing-in-action cases. At the same time, the working group is pressing the Russians for access to still classified records that are believed to be directly relevant to unresolved cases. The Korean War group also continued its aggressive interview program in 2002, taking the testimony of nearly 100 former Soviet military veterans and developing leads to locate hundreds of others.

JOINT RECOVERY OPERATIONS

DPMO provided key analytical support to CILHI for the search and recovery program in North Korea. Our analysts' research helped develop lists of prison camp cemeteries, UN cemeteries, and battlefield and air loss sites for CILHI to use in search and recovery operations. In high-level talks with the North Koreans, DPMO negotiators nominated prominent loss sites for recovery.

During the JROs, which took place from July to October, DPMO analysts provided direct and rapid research capability to answer casualty questions from the recovery teams. Upon the completion of the JROs, our analysts continued to support CILHI queries related to recoveries from the Unsan and Chosin battlefields and a November-December 1950 POW evacuation route to Pukchin Tarigol near the Yalu River.

During the JROs this year, CILHI recovered what is believed to be the remains of 26 missing servicemen, for a total of 178 since operations began in 1996.

DPMO led a delegation of American Korean War veterans and four next-of-kin of unaccounted-for servicemen to North Korea during the September JRO mission. For the first time, the North Korean government permitted retired U.S. Marine Corps General Ray Davis to return to the west side of the Chosin Reservoir, to Yudam-ni and 'Fox Hill.' He received the Medal of Honor for his wartime actions there. The family and veterans representatives were very helpful in articulating to the North Koreans the importance of cooperating with the U.S. on our accounting initiatives.

PERSONNEL MISSING KOREA LIST

DPMO's working document for maintaining a list of unaccounted-for from the Korean War is the PMKOR, which we added to our Web site in February 1999. Over this past year, we made more than 15,000 administrative updates to the list. These changes included name spelling, unit corrections and updates to individual identifications. We based these corrections on archival research and information family members and the public have provided us. The working number of missing personnel on this list was 8,134 at year's end.

A major focus this year for DPMO has been U.S. crash sites in the Russian Far East. We have uncovered data that possibly pinpoints the location on the Kurile Islands (formerly Japanese territory but under control of USSR/Russia since the end of WWII) of the grave of an American airman who died during an attack against a Japanese naval base in 1945. We are planning to survey the site, which is located in a very remote area the summer of 2003. We also hope to visit up to six additional crash sites in other areas of Russia.

Another initiative spearheaded by the Gulag study group and supported by the World War II working group is an agreement we concluded with the Russian State Military Archives for complete access to the archives' prisoner-name card files and prisoner lists from the Soviet Interior Ministry's convoy troops. Such access could provide information to help account for a number of U.S. servicemen who are still unaccounted-for from POW camps at the end of WWII. The starting point in this archive will be the

names of Americans generated by the working group's analysis of U.S. Air Force debriefings of German and Japanese POWs and internees released from the Soviet prison system in the late 1940s and early 1950s.

DPMO's research last year on the nine missing WWII Marine Raiders on the Japanese island of Kwajalein led to a recovery effort of the remains on that Pacific island. In February, CILHI sent a recovery team to Kwajalein in an attempt to recover the Raiders' remains based on the gravesite location DPMO identified. One of our researchers accompanied the recovery team to the island to assist. Because of the radical changes in the Kwajalein landscape and bomb damage that occurred on the island, pinpointing the mass burial proved to be difficult. The site is pending further investigative work.

TIBET INITIATIVE

In May, a DPMO/CILHI delegation traveled to Beijing and Tibet to hold technical discussions with the People's



Discussions in Burma reveal considerable data on American crash sites.

Republic of China Ministry of Foreign Affairs and People's Liberation Army. Discussions involved preparations for WWII-era Tibet recoveries that occurred in the summer. At the technical discussion, the PRC agreed to investigate a 1952 civil air transport crash site where two individuals were never recovered. This was a major breakthrough in the POW/MIA program with China, and is a sign of improved cooperation since the EP-3 incident in 2001.

BURMA INITIATIVE

DPMO and CILHI analysts traveled to Burma in November to conduct archival research in Yangon (formerly Rangoon), both from U.S. holdings based on postwar reporting of crash sites as well as relevant Burmese records. This visit revealed a wealth of data on nine crash sites that we will survey beginning in 2003.

Helping POW/MIA families get factual and timely answers is one of our most important activities. This year DPMO wrote more than 14,000 letters to family members about their loved ones' cases. We also mailed them scores of case files from the Cold War, Korean War and Vietnam War. Responding to family inquiries with complete, credible and timely answers helps strengthen their understanding of and support for our POW/MIA accounting efforts. We also answered numerous inquiries generated by Congress, veterans' groups, concerned citizens and from other government entities with an interest in the issue.

FOIAs ELECTRONIC REDACTION

We are continuing to upgrade our information technology systems. This year we went on-line with a new declassification and redaction system which has improved our efficiency in responding to Freedom of Information requests. Moreover, the system facilitates electronic submissions to the Library of Congress. DPMO also recently began operation of a video conferencing system. This new capability greatly enhances our ability to collect, analyze and disseminate information.

MICROFILMS, LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

DPMO completed an in-house conversion of 488-microfilmed reels to electronic image. Additionally, we converted 274,900 pages to electronic image and electronically delivered them to the LoC. The LoC is now in the final stage of reviewing and linking the electronic document images with their existing index. When we complete this phase, the project will be ready for on-line public access.

Our staff continues working with the LoC to reconfigure the Vietnam POW/MIA database. This project will provide more user-friendly access by the public to stored documents. The intent is to provide direct access to documents in the LoC database, which has not heretofore been possible with the current database in microfilm format. We have successfully tested an experimental Web site previewing the new capability. We have not yet fully implemented the new on-line database, but expect it to be available to the public, via the Internet, on the LoC Web site by mid 2003.

DPMO's *Personnel Recovery and Accounting-POW/MIA Accounting* booklet is one method we use to deliver our

message to the American public. In this year alone, we distributed almost 7,000 booklets to the public, members of

Congress and the families of the missing. This 68-page booklet clearly defines our efforts to achieve the *fullest possible accounting*.

ANNUAL EVENTS

POW/MIA Recognition Day, September 17.

Observances of National POW/MIA Recognition Day were held across the country on military installations, ships at sea, state capitols, schools and veterans' facilities. DPMO coordinated the Pentagon ceremony that included a military aircraft flyover and troop formations from each of the military



Our Family Update in Columbus, Ohio, hosted 214 attendees, the largest number of family members ever to attend such a program in the eight years of its existence.

branches of service. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld hosted this year's ceremony. The guest speaker was Congressman Sam Johnson (R-TX), a former POW from the Vietnam War and Korean War veteran.

DPMO distributed more than 120,000 National POW/MIA Recognition Day posters to USG entities, military services, veterans groups and family organizations. We also made the poster available for download from the DPMO Web site.

National POW/MIA Prayer Breakfast. DPMO held its eighth annual National POW/MIA Prayer Breakfast on February 7th in Arlington, Va. Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz was the primary speaker at this event. Honored guests included former POWs from the Vietnam War, the Korean War and WWII, as well as families of men still missing.

Regional Family Updates. DPMO organizes 10 family updates at cities across the country every year. The updates offer families personal attention and direct access to a team

of specialists who speak on the POW/MIA issue. They also provide contact with other POW/MIA families. In response to family member input, we added separate and concurrent briefing sessions for Southeast Asia and Korean/Cold War families. The revised format has been a great success. In 2002, more than 1,000 family members took full advantage of this outreach program, eclipsing the previous year's record by nearly 250.

Other additions to the program include the question and answer sessions and an Internet demonstration showing families how to conduct their own research on their missing loved one the Web. As in past years, experts present information on the latest technologies used to identify remains, including mitochondrial DNA. As a culmination of the daylong program, we afford the families the opportunity to ask questions and review details of their own case privately with government officials. Families continue to receive the most recent information available via the *Family Update Agenda Booklet*.

We also provide the *Family Member Orientation Handbook* to all new family members who attend. In an effort to reach even more new families, the publication is now available on the DPMO Web site.



Many DPMO employees host annual government briefings to the families of those still missing.

National League of Families Annual Meeting. DPMO coordinated an annual government briefing in Washington for families of the missing from the war in Vietnam. In June, officials from every element of the POW/MIA accounting community presented briefings to 211 family

members and concerned citizens. The Vietnam War briefings took place during the 33rd Annual Meeting of the National League of Families. DPMO; the Armed Forces DNA Identification Laboratory; CILHI; JTF-FA; the Defense Intelligence Agency; LSEL and the casualty offices of the Air Force, the Army, the Navy, the Marine Corps and the Department of State were all represented. Briefers included senior policy officials, analysts and scientists.

We drafted and then implemented the Secretary of Defense's new guidance on travel assistance to national forums such as this by POW/MIA family members, otherwise known as "COIN ASSIST."

In 2002, DPMO continued to provide case summary sheets to all attendees of the annual government briefings.

Annual Korean/Cold War Government Briefings. DPMO coordinated briefings for families and family organizations interested in our comprehensive accounting effort. As a result of the service casualty offices' "Korean War outreach program," and with the implementation of COIN ASSIST for K/CW family members, 717 family members attended this year's meeting. This is a dramatic increase from recent years and resulted in expanding the program to a two-day event.

This year, family members received a full day of briefings that covered all aspects of the accounting mission. We developed the agenda based on input from K/CW family organizations and input from the previous year's questionnaires. Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz provided the keynote address. The second day was devoted to case specific, one-on-one sessions between family members and government experts.

We intentionally scheduled the K/CW annual meeting to coincide with the Korean War Armistice commemoration events held on July 27th. As a result, many family members were able to attend the armistice ceremonies at the Korean War memorial and a concert in honor of Korean War veterans and their families. DPMO provided case summary sheets to all attendees.

OTHER OUTREACH EFFORTS

In April, DPMO analysts briefed a North Carolina high school class studying the Vietnam War and the POW/MIA issue. This visit to Washington is an annual event that helps students understand issues still surrounding the Vietnam War and the USG's commitment to account for our missing.

Web site – Visit us on the Web at: www.dtic.mil/dpmo.

The DPMO homepage provides information to assist visitors in understanding the USG efforts to achieve the *fullest possible accounting* of our missing service



Television crew prepares to document our Family Update program in Columbus, Ohio. The story reached thousands of viewers that evening on two newscasts.

personnel. Many of the publications mentioned in this report can be found on our Web site. It also has information on personnel recovery issues. Many POW/MIA issue-related homepage links are also available.

The DPMO Web site has grown enormously in popularity among researchers, family members and the general public. It is linked to the DoD Web site (www.Defenselink.mil), and we average 100,000 “hits” per week. This year we hit a peak at 386,000 as researchers were gathering information for National POW/MIA Recognition Day. In support of the DPMO Personnel Recovery Conference, we made registration materials and background information available on the Web site. This proved to be a very effective way to streamline routine administrative requirements for conference attendees.



Our contact with local, national and international media generates comprehensive coverage of our mission for millions of readers.



Accounting for missing Americans is a story of great interest to international media. Here, Mr. Jennings is interviewed by a Japanese television crew on our work in North Korea.

Media and Veterans' Outreach. We continued our successful effort to tell the story of POW/MIA accounting through direct contact with veterans' organizations and their leadership, as well as through national and local news media.

For the first time in DPMO's history, we appeared at the top four national conventions of the largest Veterans' Service Organizations. Additionally, we conducted veterans updates in 10 cities across the country to ensure that local veterans and their leaders have access to the latest information on the POW/MIA accounting mission. We hold these updates in conjunction with the family update programs in those cities.

The major VSOs with which we communicate on a regular basis count approximately 12 million members within their organizations.

At each of the veterans updates and family updates, we seek to generate local media interest and coverage. While we may have several hundred family members or veterans attend these local events, our media outreach efforts have enabled us to share with millions of other readers or viewers the story of our commitment.

Our contact with national and international media continues to generate significant, positive coverage of the POW/MIA issue. Throughout most of this year, we assisted *Discovery Channel* producers in development of a balanced story about the search for the one unaccounted-for individual from *Desert Storm*, Navy Captain Michael Scott Speicher. Air date is expected in early 2003. Stories generated by DPMO have also appeared on other networks, wire services and major newspapers throughout the year, reaching millions of readers and viewers around the world.

Personnel recovery is the umbrella term for operations focused on the task of recovering captured, missing or isolated personnel from danger. It is the sum of military, civil and political efforts to obtain the release or recovery of personnel from uncertain or hostile environments and denied areas. That includes U.S., allied, coalition, friendly military, or paramilitary and others designated by the national command authorities. Personnel recovery includes, but is not limited to, theater (civil) search and rescue; combat search and rescue; survival, evasion, resistance and escape; evasion and recovery; and the coordination of negotiated as well as forcible recovery options. Personnel recovery may occur through military action, action by non-governmental organizations, other USG-approved action, and/or diplomatic initiatives, or through any combination of those options.

The *Missing Persons Act* (excerpt on page 40) gives DPMO policy, control and oversight over all matters pertaining to missing personnel. We focus our efforts on establishing an initial policy foundation for personnel recovery in DoD. That foundation consists of creating policies, procedures and relationships to resolve long-standing challenges and provide a common understanding of personnel recovery throughout the department.

That foundation of personnel recovery is established sufficiently enough now that we are shifting our focus from the present to the future – to anticipate rather than react to changes within DoD and the evolving nature of warfare. We have begun to look beyond the traditional boundaries of personnel recovery – rescuing uniformed personnel who become isolated as a result of hostile action – to expand our efforts into other areas, such as:

- Evaluate the manner in which U.S. recovery forces work with our allies and coalition partners,
- Examine our responsibilities for DoD civilians and contractors who might become isolated,
- Formalize policy responsibilities for DoD support to civil search and rescue, including opportunities to include personnel recovery into theater security cooperation plans worldwide,
- Acquiring state of the art personnel recovery systems, and
- Studying personnel recovery capabilities from a national standpoint to identify DoD roles and responsibilities within National Personnel Recovery Architecture.



Escape and evasion tactics are used as part of unit tactical training exercises in a coalition environment.

PERSONNEL RECOVERY IN A COALITION ENVIRONMENT

DPMO received a study it commissioned two years ago, on the impact on our personnel recovery capability of operating in a coalition environment. This study's goal was to improve the combatant commanders' ability to recover isolated personnel and support our effort to assess personnel recovery efforts in a coalition environment. The study recommended that DPMO revise current personnel recovery policy to address U.S. participation in three specific types of multinational military operations: allied operations; coalition operations where we are the coalition builder; and coalition operations where the U.S. is not the coalition builder.

Overall, the study found that personnel recovery remains a valuable engagement tool for the combatant commanders and that theater SAR alliances may open the door to non-traditional coalition partners. The U.S. military has the preeminent personnel recovery capability, and our allies and coalition partners expect that we will use that capability to recover their personnel. Current U.S. policy, however, does not match this perception and the study also recommended changes in this area. DPMO will continue to evaluate the study and will work with our allies and coalition partners to develop an action plan.

In recognition of the importance of allied and coalition operations, DPMO vigorously pursues opportunities to engage our foreign partners on personnel recovery matters. Our initiatives in 2002 included:

- Meeting with officials of the United Kingdom's Ministry of Defence. The UK is actively seeking to strengthen their personnel recovery capability to complement U.S. capabilities. These mid-level meetings investigated means to standardize policies, procedures and equipment. One significant result was the UK decision to fund jointly a DoD advanced concept technology demonstration.
- Increasing allied and coalition participation in the DoD Personnel Recovery Conference. More than 20 individuals from six nations attended the 2002 conference in addition to the 400 U.S. specialists.
- Assuming the lead role for the DoD delegation to the NATO Search and Rescue Working Group. The SARWG is tasked to develop personnel recovery

policy for NATO, and DPMO's new role will enable us to actively engage our NATO partners on a wide range of personnel recovery issues, to reinforce critical relationships, and to standardize allied and U.S. policies and procedures.

DOD SUPPORTS TO CIVIL SEARCH AND RESCUE

DoD support to civil SAR is a growth area for DoD personnel recovery forces. In addition to the obvious domestic benefits, civil SAR enhances our military reputation abroad and has proven to be an effective means for our combatant commands to gain access to non-traditional partner nations as set forth in their respective theater security cooperation plans.

DPMO completed a series of meetings with the government of India that led to several civil SAR exercises. We also made preliminary contacts with the government of Cambodia to investigate similar activities with that nation. The non-threatening, humanitarian nature of civil SAR is proving to be an excellent means of initiating military to military contact where none has existed.

ACQUISITION OF FUTURE PERSONNEL RECOVERY SYSTEMS

DPMO serves as the Office of the Secretary of Defense “advocate” for personnel recovery acquisition matters, establishing priorities, identifying opportunities, and encouraging others to place greater emphasis on improving and exercising our recovery capability, and we work closely with the Office of the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Advanced Systems and Concepts.



Personnel recovery is a valuable SAR engagement tool for the combatant commanders

We do this in part by advocating advanced technologies applicable to the personnel recovery missions. In 2002, we were active in promoting emerging technologies and protecting funding for two systems that will improve our ability to locate isolated personnel – the Combat Survivor/Evader Locator System and the Global Personnel Recovery System. One of our long-standing objectives is to take the “search” out of combat search and rescue. Rapid identification of an isolated person’s location significantly improves the chances for a successful recovery.

THE MISSING PERSONS ACT

Excerpt from Public Law 105-153

§ 1501. System for accounting for missing service personnel

(a) Office for missing personnel --

(1) The Secretary of Defense shall establish within the Office of the Secretary of Defense an office to have responsibility for Department of Defense policy relating to missing persons. Subject to the authority, direction, and control of the Secretary of Defense, the responsibilities of the office shall include

(A) Policy, control, and oversight within the Department of Defense of the entire process for investigation and recovery related to missing persons (including matters related to search, rescue, escape, and evasion); and

(B) Coordination for the Department of Defense with other departments and agencies of the United States on all matters concerning missing persons.

(2) In carrying out the responsibilities of the office established under this subsection, the head of the office shall be responsible for the coordination for such purposes within the Department of Defense among the military departments, the Joint Staff, and the commanders of the combatant commands.

(3) The office shall establish policies, which shall apply uniformly throughout the Department of Defense, for personnel recovery (including search, rescue, escape, and evasion).

(4) The office shall establish procedures to be followed by Department of Defense boards of inquiry, and by officials reviewing the reports of such boards, under this chapter.

Definitions of Terms

CILHI	U.S. Army Central Identification Laboratory, Hawaii
DoD	Department of Defense
DPMO	Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office
JPRA	Joint Personnel Recovery Agency
JTF-FA	Joint Task Force Full Accounting
JRO	Joint Recovery Operation
LKA	Last Known Alive
LSEL	Life Sciences Equipment Laboratory
MIA	Missing in Action
OSS	Office of Strategic Services, a WWII intelligence organization and precursor to the Central Intelligence Agency
POW	Prisoner of War
Stony Beach	DIA Intelligence office that investigates Live-Sighting Reports
USG	United States government

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